

FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND URBAN CHANGE
YORK UNIVERSITY

QUALITATIVE METHODS:

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGICAL CHOICE in ES

ENVS 6183, Credit Value: 3, Winter 2025

Course Director: Sarah Flicker, flicker@yorku.ca

Office hours: Wednesdays 11:30-12:30, HNES 287 HNES Building or online by appointment

Official Course Description: Examination of the various phases of carrying out research in the field: planning the research project; choosing appropriate methods for data collection; analyzing data and communicating results of research. Emphasis is on analysis and reporting of questionnaire and qualitative data.

Expanded Course Description: The course is divided into four parts. First, students will explore various ontological, epistemological and theoretical standpoints and develop their own set of commitments to ground their work. We will also discuss the unique features of environmental and sustainability-focused research, with a focus on critical theory and reflexivity. Second, we will delve into the art of qualitative interviewing and analyzing interview data. The third portion of the course will explore a plethora of complimentary qualitative methods and methodologies and consider their application opportunities and challenges. The final quarter of the course will examine ethics, knowledge mobilization and rigour. Throughout the semester, students will be working towards drafting their own research proposals using the MES template.

Objectives:

- To read and discuss a range of texts on research, knowledge production, methods and methodologies, interdisciplinarity, and theory/praxis in the social sciences.
- To explore frameworks for critical analysis of research approaches and knowledge production, highlighting social (in)equities and their relationship with research processes.
- To develop and hone interviewing and analysis skills.
- To explore a variety of qualitative methods and methodologies.
- To provide students with opportunities for research project development and proposal-writing.

Anticipated Course Readings or Texts

Note: *Links for the readings can all be found on e-class. Additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course.*

PART A, INTRODUCTION TO KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION (WKS 1-3)

Class 1 (Jan 8): What is knowledge? How do we know what we know? Where do qualitative methods fit?

Moon, K., & Blackman, D. (2014). Guide to Understanding Social Science Research for Natural Scientists. *Conservation Biology*, 28(5), 1167–1177 [LINK](#)

Choi, B. C. K., & Pak, A. W. P. (2006). Multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity in health research, services, education and policy: 1. Definitions, objectives, and evidence of effectiveness. *Clinical and Investigative Medicine*, 29(6), 351–364. [LINK](#)

Watch in class: Video: Epistemology, Ontology, and Axiology in Research, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhdZOsBps5o>

Discussion about which disciplines everyone hopes/plans to span in their own research and why.

Class 2 (Jan 15): Reflexivity: Who are we in relation to what we study?

Strega, Susan (2015). Ch 5: The View from the Poststructural Margins: Epistemology and Methodology Reconsidered. In *Research As Resistance: Revisiting Critical, Indigenous, And Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. (eds) Brown, L., & Strega, S. Canadian Scholars Press. P119-152 [LINK](#)

Temper, L., McGarry, D., & Weber, L. (2019). From academic to political rigour: Insights from the 'Tarot' of transgressive research. *Ecological Economics*, 164(July), 106379. [LINK](#)

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang (2014). "Unbecoming Claims: Pedagogies of Refusal in Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 20 (6): 811–18. [LINK](#)

Palaganas, E., Sanchez, M., Molintas, Ma. V., & Caricativo, R. (2017). Reflexivity in Qualitative Research: A Journey of Learning. *Qualitative Report*, 22(2), 426-. [LINK](#)

Recommended:

Eizenberg, Efrat and Mor Shilon (2015) "Pedagogy for the new planner: Refining the qualitative toolbox," *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 0265813515604477, published online September 16, 20

Drafts due in class for workshopping: (a) Statement of Research Topic (1 paragraph) & (b) Specific Research Questions.

Class 3 (Jan 22): Speaking back to the mainstream: participatory, feminist and anti-racist scholarship

Cargo, M., & Mercer, S. L. (2008). The Value and Challenges of Participatory Research: Strengthening Its Practice. *Annual Review of Public Health, 29*(1), 325–350. [LINK](#)

McHugh, M. C. (2020). Ch 8: Feminist Qualitative Research: Working toward Transforming Science and Social Justice. In *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (ed. P. Leavy). Oxford University Press. [LINK](#)

Ladson-Billings, G. (1999). Just What Is Critical Race Theory, and What's It Doing in a Nice Field Like Education? In *Race Is ... Race Isn't* (eds. Parker, L., Deyhle, D., & Villenas, S). 1st ed., pp. 7–30. Routledge. [LINK](#)

Drafts due in class for workshopping: Personal Research Statement (1 page) that clarifies your ontological, epistemological and axiological position! Discussion about our theoretical standpoints and commitments.

Recommended:

van der Meulen, E. (2011). Participatory and action-oriented dissertations: the challenges and importance of community-engaged graduate research. *Qualitative Report, 16*(5), 1291–1303. [LINK](#)

Khobzi, N., & Flicker, S. (2010). Lessons Learned From Undertaking Community-Based Participatory Research Dissertations: The Trials and Triumphs of Two Junior Health Scholars. *Progress in Community Health Partnerships, 4*(4), 347–356. [LINK](#)

Smith, L. T. (2004). *Decolonizing Methodologies; Research and Indigenous Peoples* (7th ed.). Zed Books Ltd. [LINK](#)

PART B, A DEEP DIVE INTO QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING (WKS 4-6)

Class 4 (Jan 29) Interviewing & Transcribing

Jacob, S. A., & Furgerson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report, 17*(42), 1-10 <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol17/iss42/3/>

Roberts, R. E. (2020). Qualitative Interview Questions: Guidance for Novice Researchers. *Qualitative Report, 25*(9). [LINK](#)

Poland, Blake D. "Transcription quality as an aspect of rigor in qualitative research." *Qualitative inquiry* 1, no. 3 (1995): 290-310. [LINK](#)

Discussion about interviewing techniques. In class time to practice interviews.

Recommended:

Turner III, D. W. (2010). Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators. *The qualitative report*, 15(3), 754. [LINK](#)

Patrick Dilley (2000) Conducting Successful Interviews: Tips for Intrepid Research, *Theory Into Practice*, 39:3, 131-137. [LINK](#)

Lapadat, J. C. (2000). Problematizing transcription: Purpose, paradigm and quality. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 3(3), 203-219 [LINK](#)

Kallio, H., Pietilä, A. M., Johnson, M., & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 72(12), 2954-2965. [LINK](#)

Seyedi, S., Griner, E., Corbin, L., Jiang, Z., Roberts, K., Iacobelli, L., Milloy, A., Boazak, M., Bahrami Rad, A., Abbasi, A., Cotes, R. O., & Clifford, G. D. (2023). Using HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)-Compliant Transcription Services for Virtual Psychiatric Interviews: Pilot Comparison Study. *JMIR Mental Health*, 10, e48517–e48517. <https://doi.org/10.2196/48517> [LINK](#)

Vedapudi, Varsha; Byrnes, Mary; Skolarus, Ted; and Stensland, Kristian (2024) "Zooming Towards Rapid Qualitative Research for Implementation Science," *Health Behavior Research: Vol. 7: No. 3*. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2572-1836.1234>

Class 5 (Feb 5) Coding

Elliott, V. (2018). Thinking about the Coding Process in Qualitative Data Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2850-2861. [LINK](#)

Flicker, S., & Nixon, S. A. (2015). The DEPICT model for participatory qualitative health promotion research analysis piloted in Canada, Zambia and South Africa. *Health promotion international* 30 (3):616-624. [LINK](#)

Skjott Linneberg, M., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: a synthesis guiding the novice. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 19(3), 259–270 [LINK](#)

Due in class: hardcopy print out of your interview transcript, and digital copy uploaded to Taguette. Discussion of coding and themes. Practice coding.

Recommended:

Cho, J. Y., & Lee, E. H. (2014). Reducing confusion about grounded theory and qualitative content analysis: Similarities and differences. *The Qualitative Report*, 19(32), 1 [LINK](#)

Ramanadhan, S., Revette, A. C., Lee, R. M., & Aveling, E. L. (2021). Pragmatic approaches to analyzing qualitative data for implementation science: an introduction. *Implementation Science*

Communications, 2, 1-10. [LINK](#)

Auerbach, C., & Silverstein, L. B. (2003). Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysis (Vol. 21). NYU press.

Adu, P. (2019). *A step-by-step guide to qualitative data coding*. Routledge.

Johnny Saldana. The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2013. 328 pages. Paperback ISBN: 9781446247372

Class 6 (Feb 12) Analysis (Sense Making)

Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. *Field methods*, 15(1), 85-109. [LINK](#)

Chenail, R. J. (1995). Presenting qualitative data. *The qualitative report*, 2(3), 1-9. [LINK](#)

Flicker, S., & Nixon, S. A. (2018). Writing peer-reviewed articles with diverse teams: considerations for novice scholars conducting community-engaged research. *Health Promotion International*, 33(1), 152–161. [LINK](#)

Discussion of analysis. Creating models and practicing “write ups.”

*****No Class Feb 19, Reading Week!*****

PART C, BEYOND THE INTERVIEW (WKS 7-9)

Class 7 (Feb 26) Methods Fair: This is how we do it!

Each group will choose, research, and make a presentation to the class on one qualitative research method used in the social sciences. Presentations will cover: what is the method? how is it done (approaches to data collection, analysis and dissemination)? what kind of research areas or questions is it particularly useful for? why might someone choose this approach (what is the added value)? what resources are necessary for successful completion? Are there any drawbacks, shortcomings, challenges or caveats worth mentioning? Present at least 1 example of research using this method, explaining how it was carried out and how the method affected the results. Share a bibliography of resources (articles, manuals, textbooks) that explains how to use the method and how the method has been used to study your topic of interest.

Possible methods include: Case studies, Focus Groups, Interviews, Personal narratives, Storytelling, Ethnography, Mapping, Discourse Analysis, Document Analysis, Photography, Photovoice, Cellphilmimg, Video/Documentary, Participatory Film, Digital Storytelling, Body Mapping, Drawing, Mural Making etc.

Due in class: PRESENTATIONS with printed handouts for the class!

Class 8 (Mar 5): Participatory Visual Methodologies

MacEntee, K., & Flicker, S. (2018). Doing It: Participatory Visual Methodologies and Youth Sexuality Research. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Sexual Development* (pp. 352–372). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108116121.019> [LINK](#)

MacEntee, K., Kendrick, C., & Flicker, S. (2022). Quilted cellphilm method: A participatory visual health research method for working with marginalised and stigmatised communities. *Global Public Health*, 17(7), 1420-1432. [LINK](#)

MacEntee, K., & Flicker, S. (2023). Ch 4. Dancing on the Balance Beam: Facilitating Cellphilm-Making. In *Cellphilm As a Participatory Visual Method* (1st ed., pp. 57–78). Routledge. [LINK](#)

A hands-on workshop on doing PVM.

Class 9 (Mar 12): Research Design: Putting it all together

Jonsen, K., & Jehn, K. A. (2009). Using triangulation to validate themes in qualitative studies. In *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal* (Vol. 4, Number 2, pp. 123–150). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17465640910978391> [LINK](#)

Ivankova, N. V., & Creswell, J. W. (2009). Ch 7 Mixed methods. *Qualitative research in applied linguistics: A practical introduction* (Juanita Heigham & Robert A. Croker eds), pp135-161. [LINK](#)

Darbyshire, P., MacDougall, C., & Schiller, W. (2005). Multiple methods in qualitative research with children: more insight or just more? *Qualitative Research*, 5(4), 417-436. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794105056921> [LINK](#)

Recommended: Morse, J.M. (2009). *Mixed Method Design: Principles and Procedures* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315424538>

Due in class: First full draft of research proposal using EUC template. The methods section should be well developed and include references to methodological textbooks and journal articles.

PART D, FINALIZING MP PROPOSALS (WKS 10-12)

Class 10 (Mar 19): Ethics

Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 409-428. [LINK](#)

Taquette, S. R., & Borges da Matta Souza, L. M. (2022). Ethical Dilemmas in Qualitative Research: A Critical Literature Review. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 21. [LINK](#)

Gubrium, A. C., Hill, A. L., & Flicker, S. (2014). A situated practice of ethics for participatory visual and digital methods in public health research and practice: A focus on digital storytelling. *American journal of public health*, 104(9), 1606-1614. [LINK](#)

Due in class: Certificate from TCPS tutorial: <https://tcps2core.ca/welcome>

Class 11 (Mar 26) Writing it Up & Dissemination

Fine, M., Weis, L., Weseen, S., & Wong, L. (2000). For whom. Qualitative research, representations, and social responsibilities. In NK Denzin & YS Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2, 107-131 <https://www.sfu.ca/~palys/FineEtAl-2003-ForWhom.pdf>

Keen, S., & Todres, L. (2007, September). Strategies for disseminating qualitative research findings: Three exemplars. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 8, No. 3). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/285>

Cook, W. K. (2008). Integrating research and action: a systematic review of community-based participatory research to address health disparities in environmental and occupational health in the USA. *Journal of epidemiology and community health*, 62(8), 668-676. <http://ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/login?url=http://www.jstor.org/stable/40665880>

Due in class: draft Informed Consent Form using the EUC template (off dossier).

Recommended:

Cassandra Ritas (2003) *Speaking Truth, Creating Power: A Guide to Policy Work for Community-Based Participatory Research Practitioners*. Hunter College Center on AIDS, Drugs and Community Health, for Community-Campus Partnerships for Health.

http://www.livingknowledge.org/fileadmin/Dateien-Living-Knowledge/Dokumente_Dateien/Toolbox/LK_F_Toolkit_for_Policy_Change.pdf

Class 12 (Apr 2) Validity & Rigor

Morse, J. M. (2015). Critical analysis of strategies for determining rigor in qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative health research*, 25(9), 1212-1222.

Mayan, M. J. (2009). Ch 7: Rigor. *Essentials of qualitative inquiry*. Left Coast Press. Walnut Creek, CA (p100-113)

Schwandt, T. A., Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E. G. (2007), Judging interpretations: But is it rigorous? trustworthiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2007: 11–25. doi:10.1002/ev.223 (see PDF)

Due in class: FINAL PROPOSAL + INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Recommended:

Mays, N., & Pope, C. (2000). Assessing quality in qualitative research. *British medical journal*, 320(7226),

50. <http://ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/login?url=http://www.jstor.org/stable/25186737>

Seale, C. (1999). Quality in qualitative research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 5(4), 465-478.

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.460.3511&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Evaluation: Grading and Course Requirements

- (1) class attendance and participation in seminar discussions (20%)
- (2) mini-interview assignment (30%) ~ Feb 5
- (3) presentation about a research method (20%) ~ Feb 26
- (4) your completion of your own Major Research Proposal using the EUC template (30%) ~ Apr 2

Important Course information

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the [Senate Committee on Academic Standards, Curriculum & Pedagogy webpage](#)

- Senate Policy on Academic Honesty and the Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

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